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# SERVICE NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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The NEWS is intended to inform staff members of  
developments within the Service and is not for  
distribution to others

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Benton, Miss Mildred

October 5, 1940

## YOUR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT SAYS--

What about the National Defense Program? How will it affect agriculture, and how can agriculture contribute? What will it mean to the SCS and what can we do to help?

These are questions we've all been turning over in our minds--logical, natural questions to be asking nowadays.

By way of answering some of them, SERVICE NEWS in the next few weeks will carry all the information we can get about the defense program and its relation to our work. The NEWS is available to all members of the staff, and we're told that people read it. So here, in brief, but what we hope will be adequate space, we're going to relay to you everything we learn at this end of the line.

Right now, it looks to us like people in the SCS can help the national defense program in two ways. One, of course, is by doing a better job of conservation, since our land resources are more important now than ever. If we bear down a little more, work a little harder at the job of saving soil, we'll be making a real and vital contribution to defense.

But beyond that, we can do something more. We can help to keep the agricultural segment of the population informed about the defense program as a whole.

We're an important part of the Department's field arm -- down at the grass-root level, our staff is in constant touch with farm people. There's an interchange of ideas, opinions, news, and comment between SCS men and farm people every day. We can help the defense program by transmitting to these people as much accurate information as we can get.

As we see it, it's not merely our job to interpret the work of the Service in light of national defense needs, although we must do that, of course. We can do an even bigger job by trying to explain the national defense program against the broad background of world events, by reporting current progress, by



discussing in a well-informed way the effects of the defense program on agriculture generally and on soil conservation in particular.

But we can do this kind of job only if we are well-informed ourselves.

That's why SERVICE NEWS is going to try to give you general as well as specific information about the defense program. We can't lay out a program exactly, but here's what we're going to try to do:

1. Outline the background of the defense program--the reasons behind it.
2. Explain the nature of the program--what is being done, who is who, who does what, and so on.
3. Help indicate how the defense program affects agriculture generally and how agriculture fits into the defense program.
4. Help indicate how the defense program affects our own SCS work, so that each of us can align his own efforts to defense needs.
5. Report current progress of the defense program.

Some of this information is coming from the Defense Commission. Some of it is coming from the Department, where the whole question of agricultural assistance in and reaction to the defense program is under almost constant discussion nowadays. And some of it will come from our own staff, which is trying now to relate defense needs to the program of the Service.

We don't want anything we do to take on the aspect of a special "campaign" or special "program". We think we can do our part, speaking as a Service, in stride. Here in Washington, we believe that SCS people in the field can help to give farmers an accurate understanding of the defense program without calling special meetings or thumping drums, or doing anything of that sort. If we keep you informed, we believe you'll help to keep the agricultural portion of the population informed through your normal, every-day contacts with them.

If you have any ideas, the Open Forum will be glad to hear them. If they're good, we'll use them, too. And, any questions?

OPEN FORUM

Editor, Service News: You asked for it. Here it is! I am disturbed by the lack of uniformity of duties in SCS and CCC. My first connection with the Soil Conservation Service was technician in a CCC camp. At that time I did not understand what the camp superintendent meant when he said SCS is unfair to CCC. I think that I know now. Later I was transferred to the SCS and assigned to a Project where I found welcome relief from the extra-hour duties which had been taken for granted in CCC. Now I am back in CCC and find that I can no longer take for granted these extra-hour duties.

On the Project I worked forty-four hours and my week was finished. No more was required. Most of the field personnel actually put in considerably more than forty-four hours but it was all right. There was no feeling of compulsion behind it. I think we all took a good deal of pride in the free will offering.

My present field duties are very similar to what they were on the Project. I merely moved to a Soil Erosion District. But after hours life has changed entirely. Immediately I was contacted by persons interested in a camp educational program. I am now devoting three evenings a week to classes with CCC enrollees. I am obliged to take my turn over week-ends and holidays in charge of quarters at camp. I take vaccinations and inoculations along with the CCC boys. All this, I am informed, is according to regulations and is my duty.

On the Project the work was near a community where residence was found for my family and I was at home most nights. Not so with my CCC assignments which are in remote places. Visits to my family at week-ends involve considerable personal travel expense and while I am paying for unused lodging at home additional pay for quarters (very meager and non-private) at the CCC camp is deducted from my pay check. There is no CCC kitchen that prepares meals to compare with what my wife serves at home, either for taste or health, and she does so at less cost per man meal. I am saying that CCC assignments beyond daily reach of home make far, far less desirable living and at the same time more expensive living. The pay deduction is the exact opposite to what should be done in fairness. The CCC program has become a great



force to separate a man from his family. That does not fit well in our home. Now there is talk of regulation uniforms to buy at higher price than non-regulation clothing of equal quality.

All this might have been taken without resentment had I remained with CCC from the first. Now I feel the inequality of it. My Civil Service appointment was obtained at no slight cost in effort. I need the present salary very much and I think I have worked rather conscientiously to earn it. It would be a serious matter with me to give it up now.

I do not object to any reasonable demands upon my time and energy. Frankly, I now feel less vitality for the job in the field and I fail to experience the old zest for the work while still seeing as much need for it as ever. Perhaps it is not so much the amount of extra time, effort and expense required as it is the manner in which it is required.

Signed: FMJ

Editor, Service News: For a long time I have been looking for the answer to something that has troubled me very much. The problem has to do with the visits that are made more or less regularly to work project offices under the ambiguous justification of "inspection trip". Now, don't get me wrong--a certain amount of inspection work is necessary and desirable; but what concerns me is the manner in which such trips are conducted.

Here's the main thing that bothers me. Why does it take so many people to make a so-called inspection trip of field work. A technician--or perhaps two--from the Washington office, accompanied by a technician--or perhaps two--from the regional office, who are in turn accompanied by a technician--or perhaps two from the area office, plus the State Coordinator arrives at a work unit office. Well, the work unit manager, determined that the visitors will see all and have all explained, decides that at least two men from his office should join those that have already assembled to take a drive through the country and see the conservation work on the farms.

What happens, then, is that one, two, or perhaps three cars, loaded to the hilt with Service representatives begin a scurrying ride over the countryside. The cars pull up at Farmer

Jones' gate and the squad rushes into his fields to walk over his terraces, trod down his vegetated waterway, kick at the rubble masonry of his small dam, and pluck at the leaves of his new woodland.

A half hour of this and the group is off again. So the process is repeated several times a day. The visitors buzz off in the late afternoon--and a group of bewildered work project technicians, and what is more important wondering farmers--are left behind to try to figure out just what was the end result of the day's touring. Frankly, I don't know and I, along with many other field technicians, would like for someone through this column to tell us why so many inspectors, and inspectors of inspectors, are needed at any one spot on any given date.

My point, briefly, is simply this. Couldn't two or three men do this job just as well as several car loads? Wouldn't the farmer feel much better about the entire deal? Are we to leave the impression that our personnel travels in large groups. More than one farmer has expressed none-too-complimentary opinions with regard to such "ganging up" for inspection purposes.

I have been on numerous field tours where Service personnel outnumbered the visiting group of farmers.

I have been in educational meetings where Service personnel outnumbered the farmers present.

Honestly, I want to know, is it necessary to have so many Service representatives at the same spot at the same time? If they must go there couldn't they at least go singly or in pairs, or even threes--but not in caravans?

Signed: PR

#### Film Strip Released

Film Strip No. 590 (49 frames) entitled "Soil and Water Conservation in New York State", prepared by Warren C. Huff, Extension Conservationist, Ithaca, New York, has been released.

This film strip points out faulty farm practices that led to soil and water losses on New York farms, and illustrates the progress made in the adoption of conservation practices.



## DISTRICT PROGRESS

August and September brought marked strides in the soil conservation district program. Memoranda of Understanding with the Department were entered into by 10 additional districts in the States of Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, North Dakota, Oklahoma (2), South Dakota, Utah, and Wisconsin. That brings the total number of districts cooperating with the Department to 248 in 28 States.

Supplemental Memoranda of Understanding have been entered into with 202 districts for making available SCS equipment and planting materials, and with 167 districts for making available CCC labor, equipment and material. WPA soil conservation projects sponsored by districts have received Federal WPA clearance for establishment in 36 districts, and 20 additional projects are pending clearance in Washington. The authorized projects involve about 21,000,000 acres.

At the present rate of district formation, it seems likely that by 1942 there will be more than 600 soil conservation districts covering perhaps 400 million acres of land over the country as a whole.

## MANIFOLD IN CENTRAL AMERICA

C. B. Manifold, Assistant Chief, Technical Operations, sailed for Honduras September 25 to join a party studying the possibilities of rubber production in the Western Hemisphere. The survey, under the direction of BAE, covers areas in Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Salvador, and Mexico.

The rubber study is the direct result of concern in this country that our existing major source of crude rubber in the East Indies and Malayan Peninsula will be cut off by the war. The survey looks to the eventual assembling and propagation of superior planting materials, and the establishment of demonstration and training sections for introducing rubber culture in the Central American nations. Successful rubber production in the Central Americas would create new trade opportunities for the nations of the Western Hemisphere.

This is the second time Mr. Manifold has been chosen for such a mission. In 1924 he was a member of a Department of Commerce party which made a similar survey in Peru.

Mr. J. S. Barnes will serve in Mr. Manifold's position during the latter's absence of approximately four months.



### THE BALANCE SHEET

(Ed.Note: here, as a regular feature, Service News reprints comment from the outside, some good, some bad, with thanks for both -- for the good because it pleases us, for the bad because it helps us see our faults as others see them.)

The following editorial is from the Omaha World Bee, Aug. 9:

#### Old Terraces and Old Bones

Some day you may see in a government bulletin a picture of terraces solemnly described as being 400 years old.

In one of the southwest states of this nation lives a Nebraskan, lately home on business, who works for the government's soil service (SCS). He got a letter from Washington announcing that a higher-up....was coming out to that state to spend three days looking over the conservation work being done.

So the local boys lined up a full three-day tour over the terracing, contouring, dams, irrigation, what-not of the area.

\* \* \*

The gentleman from Washington arrived as scheduled, but with the information that instead of staying three days he could stay only about three hours.

And he told the boys that in the brief time he had, there were four things he wanted to see. The first was the ruins of a certain ancient southwest Indian village. The second was another Indian ruin. The third was another Indian ruin. The fourth was another Indian ruin...

\* \* \*

Along the way (the Nebraskan) relates, he tried to point out to the big shot some of the conservation work the SCS men had done. But the gentleman from Washington seemed interested only in ancient things. So he thought, "Old boy, I'll give you a story."

They drove by some SCS terracing that had been done about five years ago. "That", he told the man from Washington, "was done by the early farmers here 50 years ago." The visitor was impressed.

A little later they came to some terracing that actually had been done about 40 years ago. "That," said the host and guide, "is some terracing done by the native Indian farmers here more than four hundred years ago."

At this antiquity the "farm manager" from Washington really pricked up his ears. He promptly got out his pencil and wrote it all down carefully in his official note book.....

\* \* \*

This preoccupation with archeology, anthropology and that stuff on the part of "farm" officials from Washington is not too uncommon.

Some who have visited Nebraska have been bit by the same bug. I know on the best of authority, for example, about one party out here from Washington to look over the farm relief needs of the state.

There were some enthusiasts for this ancient stuff in the party. One day the whole crowd got excited about it and, instead of inspecting the plight of drouth-hit farmers as scheduled, they were all going gaily off to hunt arrow heads or the bones of prehistoric men or something.

To stem the tide, it became necessary for a Nebraska official to ask them pretty pointedly whether they were interested in the problems of farmers who live in Nebraska now, or in the odds and ends left by people who lived here a couple of thousand years ago.

#### TRINITY FLOOD CONTROL SURVEY REPORT DUE

A report of flood control surveys on the Trinity River Watershed in Texas will be transmitted shortly to President Roosevelt. The report was prepared by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Forest Service, and Soil Conservation Service.

The report, covering approximately 17,000 square miles of the Trinity River Watershed, has recently been revised and is now ready for submission to the Flood Control Advisory Committee. The Trinity report will be the second to be submitted to the President recommending flood control operations by the Department of Agriculture. The Los Angeles River report, now awaiting approval of the President, was the first.

The report on the Trinity Watershed presents the results of field surveys which were made to plan and evaluate a program of land use and conservation measures which benefit farmers themselves, and at the same time contribute in a major way to watershed improvement and reduction of flood damages.

When the Trinity project is approved, work will start immediately. Congress has appropriated \$4,000,000 for the start of upland flood control operations in the United States. To date no allotments for specific projects have been approved.

A. H. Bean, who was Service Project Leader of the Trinity Watershed survey party, was in Washington for the past two months working with bureau members of the review committee. H. N. Smith, Chief of Project Plans Division, Region 4, is now in Washington working with the committee preparing a presentation of the report which is to be made to the Program Board and the National Resources Planning Board.

#### AMERICAN SOCIETY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

The American Society of Agricultural Sciences is now open to membership. The Society, a Pan American organization, was established by resolution passed by the Eighth American Scientific Congress held in Washington last spring.

The objects of the Society, according to Mr. J. L. Colom of the Pan American Union, are to provide a central organization to recognize agriculture as a basic industry of the Americas and as an instrument in maintaining harmonious inter-American relations; and to advance scientific agriculture through individual and collective effort throughout the American Republics.

Active membership is open to persons professionally engaged in the agricultural sciences, and associate membership to those interested in the advancement of the agricultural sciences, but not professionally engaged therein. The annual membership dues of \$2.00 may be forwarded directly to the Secretary of the Society, Mr. J. L. Colom, Chief of Division of Agricultural Cooperation, Pan American Union, Washington, D. C.

Service personnel desiring further information or copies of the constitution should get in touch with Mr. E. R. Kinnear, Project Plans Division, Washington, D. C.



FIELD MEMORANDA SEPT. 15 - OCT. 5

Ed. Note: Service News here begins a regular summary of Field Memoranda sent out since the last issue of the News. A quick glance at this summary should help you spot memoranda you should have seen, but missed.

#946 - Purchases of prison made goods. (Amending and supplementing #199 and #532)

#817-B - Recording and disposing of LU property. (Sale of un-serviceable buildings)

#941-A - Amendment of Field Memorandum #941, policy, procedure and reports for fire detection, prevention, and extinction on Title III projects.

#919-B - Amendment to Field Memorandum #919. Agreements or permits involving no consideration.

#950 - Printing and binding. (Destroy all copies of #753 as they are entirely superseded)

"Any field personnel who will have occasion to order printing or binding, or who will have any part in the procurement and fiscal matters relating thereto, are expected to read all of this memorandum."

#830-B - WPA - Affidavit required by ERA Act for 1941. Section 14 (f) of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, fiscal year 1941, reads as follows:

"No alien, no Communist, and no member of any Nazi Bund Organization shall be given employment or continued in employment on any work project prosecuted under the appropriations contained in this joint resolution and no part of the money appropriated in this joint resolution shall be available to pay any person who has not made or who does not make affidavit as to United States citizenship and to the effect that he is not a Communist and not a member of any Nazi Organization, such affidavit to be considered prima facie evidence of such citizenship, and that he is not a Communist, and not a member of any Nazi Bund Organization."

#947 - Procedure, general policies and legal authority for the establishment of LU projects.

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK (OCTOBER 6-13)

## Organization an Essential in Reducing Fire Losses

After a fire starts, it is too late to organize intelligently to fight the fire. The work done before a fire starts is the important factor. If proper organization to fight a fire has been perfected in advance, each man will know what to do, and will do it when the emergency arises.

When a fire is discovered, the first thing to do is to make certain that an alarm is given at once. Many a fire has gotten out of control because the man who first discovered it thought he could put it out without the necessity of giving an alarm. Of course, -judgment must be used by the man who discovers the fire. If he runs away from the fire to sound an alarm it may gain headway which he could have prevented had he attacked the fire immediately. Delay should not be allowed in attacking the fire while calling out, if possible, to someone else to sound the alarm.

Remember, in every fire it is the first few minutes which count. A fire should not be fought alone if there is any possibility of its getting out of control. Help should be called to be on the safe side.

It may be necessary to call a public fire department. Be sure that employees are instructed regarding the location and method of sounding the public fire alarm.

In order to meet the situations which arise in case of fire, the supervisor of a field unit should have a carefully instructed and trained fire brigade right among his own men. A small, well-instructed group can form a nucleus of an effective fire fighting force.

Study the potential fire hazards of your office or work area. Organize your fire brigade with these hazards in mind. Try to anticipate the possible fire developments and have your men instructed to meet these emergencies in advance.

Field Memoranda (Continued from page 10)

#948 - Contributions or presents to official superiors prohibited.



### SUMACH TO BE GROWN IN MIDDLE WEST

According to a recent report by Dr. J. M. Aikman, Iowa Cooperative Hillculture Project Leader, the Hillculture Experimental farm at Floris, Iowa is conducting extensive experiments with sumach of the type imported for use in tanning white leather, because the supply from the Island of Sicily has been cut off by the war.

Tests made of the tannin content of a number of sumach plants from southern Iowa show that the tannin content varies from 7 to 38 percent. Results of these tests show that the tannin content of a given plant varies with the conditions under which it grows. Experiments are in progress to determine the effect the amount of light and water has on the tannin content of the leaves of the sumach. Selected plants of high tannin content have been transplanted to the experimental plots at Floris, and tests in 1939 showed that sumach plants of the four species studied can be established by direct seeding in contour furrows on thin eroded soil.

### ✓ COLOMBIA SEEKS REFORESTATION AND SOIL CONSERVATION

In line with recommendations of one of the Department of Agriculture's missions to South America, the President of Colombia on July 17 established basic machinery for a national system of reforestation and soil conservation.

*10/10/40*  
The presidential decree creates protected forest zones on lands located at the headwaters of river basins, streams and ravines; and on margins and slopes with an incline greater than forty percent. Lands forming "The Protected Forest Zone" are to be "all those on which, according to the judgment of the Ministry of National Economy, it is fitting to maintain the forests, or to create them if they have disappeared, to the end of protecting the natural basins of water supply, feeder streams and canals, to avoid the erosion of lands and rocks, to conserve lands, to maintain lines of communication, to regulate the courses of waterways, and to contribute to general salubrity."

In the forests of the protected zone, the decree also provides penalties for unauthorized felling of trees, grubbing, or burning; and fixes procedures for sale of products coming from public lands.



## "TECHNOLOGY ON THE FARM"

If you listened to the Department's portion of the Farm and Home Hour program over NBC on August 26, you heard Howard Tolley, Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics define the meaning of technology as used in a report entitled "Technology on the Farm", soon to be released by the Inter-Bureau Coordinating Committee on Technology. Mr. Tolley said: "Webster defines technology as the 'science of industry.'" For our purposes, it means the Science of new ways and means of farming. Technology in agriculture is a combination of science, art and invention. It is tractors, combines, corn pickers. It is the testing and breeding of animals and the conquest of diseases. It is hybrid corn, new kinds of wheat, improved cotton varieties, soybeans, kudzu and lespedeza. It is ways to feed cows, plants and men. It is road-building and rural electrification. It is contour plowing, conservation of the soil, better fertilizers, management of forests, protection of wildlife. It is marketing and distribution of farm products all the way from the farms and all over the nation to the millions of consumers in our cities. It is a race between insect pests and ways to kill them. Technology embraces the workshop, the laboratory, the barn, the grove, the field and the home. It is all these things and more too. You can see that technology in agriculture is a mighty big subject -- one that concerns every farmer -- and that reaches into every farm home."

N. R. Bear of the Division of Farm Planning and Management, Service representative on the Inter-Bureau Committee, states that copies of this 223-page report will be available through regional information offices.

Following publication, F. F. Elliott, BAE chairman of the Committee, will discuss the contents of the report on the National Farm and Home Hour. Sherman Johnson, BAE, will deliver the third of this series of radio talks on farm technology.

### PRINTERS' INK

Soil Conservation Bibliography No. 2, entitled, "Personnel Administration and Personnel Training - A Selected List of References", compiled by Mildred Benton, Librarian and H. L. Buckardt, Head, Training Section, has recently been issued.

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"Pioneers--1939 Model", an article by Kenneth S. Davis, Region 5, appeared in the August-September issue of Better Crops with Plant Food. The article deals with the history of the Minnesota "bog" country and the Department's efforts to relocate settlers from the problem area. Mr. Davis tells the stories of farmers, who after moving to good land, are making a success of farming.

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"A Graphical Method for Direct Determination of Channel Dimensions" by R. B. Hickok, in charge of hydrologic studies, Lafayette, Indiana, appeared in the September issue of Agricultural Engineering. "This paper is intended", writes Mr. Hickok, "not to present specific design charts so much as to set forth a system for graphical solution of channel design problems..."

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The (Canadian) Farmer's Magazine, September, contains an article by MacCallum Bullock on "Fighting the Little Waters", which tells of the way in which Ontario's government is engaged in fighting erosion by working with the "little waters", or streams, creeks and springs which, after every rain, grow brown and muddy with the farm's best topsoil.

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In New Republic, September 2, an article, "Abolishing Rural Slums", tells how the State of Wisconsin has extended the theory of zoning from cities to rural areas, and how an act of the legislature has given counties the right to zone land as unsuited to agriculture. Thus, says the New Republic, the farmer gets a chance to make a living; the county, able to close down wilderness schools and roads, saves tremendous sums; and the public acquires new recreational centers and State forests, made from the submarginal land.

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"Erosion and Related Land Use Conditions on the Crooked Creek Project Near Indiana, Pa." by J. G. Steele and R. G. Mowrey has been issued as Erosion Survey 16.

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In American Forests, October, John C. Caldwell, discusses the education of children on the subject of conservation. He says that children in the Tennessee Valley are particularly fortunate since the TVA is turning this region into a valley of "Managed acres".

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